

Public Health Impacts of War



Global Health and Health Policy Department
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Outline

- Impact of war on public health
- A public health perspective on the prevention of war

What is War ?

- War is a state of organized, armed, and often prolonged conflict carried on between states, nations or other parties typified by extreme aggression, social disruption, and usually high mortality.
- War crises are among the top WHO Health emergency lists



Impacts of war

Health impact of war

- Injuries & illnesses
- Mental health
- Communicable disease
- Death

The Social impact of War

- breakdown of social norms and relationship
- pandemic sexual abuse, child labor

The Economic impact of War

- Reduced revenue and reduced GDP per capita
- Trade and exchanges are diverted
- Opportunity cost

Food insecurity








- Production of food items will be disturbed
- Malnutrition

Impact to the health-sustaining infrastructure

- Water supply and poor sanitation
- Electric supply
- Communication
- Destruction of health facility
- Blockage and destruction of road

Impacts of war

The human toll and humanitarian crisis of the Russia-Ukraine war: the first 162 days

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ABSTRACT

Background We examined the human toll and subsequent humanitarian crisis resulting from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which began on 24 February 2022.

Method We extracted and analysed data resulting from Russian military attacks on Ukrainians between 24 February and 4 August 2022. The data tracked direct deaths and injuries, damage to healthcare infrastructure and the impact on health, the destruction of residences, infrastructure, communication systems, and utility services – all of which disrupted the lives of Ukrainians.

Results As of 4 August 2022, 5552 civilians were killed outright and 8513 injured in Ukraine as a result of Russian attacks. Local officials estimate as many as 24 328 people were also killed in mass atrocities, with Mariupol being the largest (n=22 000) such example. Aside from wide swaths of homes, schools, roads, and bridges destroyed,

WHAT IS ALREADY KNOWN ON THIS TOPIC?

- ⇒ The Russian attack on Ukraine has caused the biggest war in Europe since the Second World War, which triggered several crises such as a massive exodus of citizens from their homes, massive deportations of people from the occupied territories, and military violence with massive executions of citizens.
- ⇒ There is little information about the in-depth impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on healthcare and the humanitarian crisis, including destruction of infrastructure and services that impact the well-being of Ukrainians daily.

WHAT THIS STUDY ADDS?

- ⇒ This is a first attempt to document civilian casualties by weapon type and damage to healthcare infra-

Impact of Ukrainian- Russian War on Health Care and Humanitarian Crisis

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Abstract

Authors explore the influence of Russian aggression on Ukrainian health care and humanitarian crises. On February 24, 2022, Ukraine faced an unprovoked brutal Russian invasion resulting in multiple negative consequences. During the 3 mo of full-scale war, Russians damaged more than 600 hospitals and killed at least 12 medics. Access to health care is severely impacted due to security concerns, restricted mobility, broken supply chains, and mass population displacement. Health care continues to come under attack (including attacks against health facilities, transport, personnel, patients, supplies, and warehouses), with a total of 295 attacks on health care, resulting in 59 injuries and 76 deaths, reported between February 24 and June 15. Ministry of Health reported that 1658 medical workers had been forced to change their residence and became employed in other regions of the country. Russian aggression negatively influenced not only the medical system and economics, but it led to a humanitarian crisis in the whole of Ukraine.

Impacts of war

- Using a high frequency phone survey data conducted on a panel of 2,677 households
- Difference-in-differences analysis
- Conflict exposure has large, statistically significant negative impacts on access to health services and food.

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Access to health services, food, and water during an active conflict: Evidence from Ethiopia

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Abstract

Civil conflict began in Ethiopia in November 2020 and has reportedly caused major disruptions in access to health services, food, and related critical services, in addition to the direct impacts of the conflict on health and well-being. However, the population-level impacts of the conflict have not yet been systematically quantified. We analyze high frequency phone surveys conducted by the World Bank, which included measures of access to basic services, to estimate the impact of the first phase of the war (November 2020 to May 2021) on households in Tigray. After controlling for sample selection, a difference-in-differences

A public health perspective on the prevention of war

- The WHO has stated, “The role of physicians and other health professionals in the preservation and promotion of peace is the most significant factor for the attainment of health for all”

A public health perspective on the prevention of war

- Health Advocacy
- Principles of public health ethics
- Management of programs and services
- Policy analysis and development
- Epidemiologic knowledge
 - Collecting and reviewing Health indicators
- Evidence generation



Summary

- War is a major threat to health
- It is important to understand the impact of war on public health in order to develop effective interventions

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